



Bed. ff. Ad General. Session. Pacis Domi. Regis tent. apud *Ampthill*, in & pro Comitatu predict. Decimo quarto Die *Januarii* Anno Regni Domini nostri Caroli Secundi Dei Gratia *Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ & Hiberniæ* Regis, Fidei Defensor. &c. tricesimo sexto, Annoq; Dom. 1684.

At which time was present, the Right Honourable Robert Earl of Ailesbury, Custos Rotulorum of the County aforesaid.

Religion being the great Instrument of Political Happiness, and Unanimity in it the most certain Promoter and Band of Peace, upon these two Reasons, therefore all prudent Governments of the World have by their Laws endeavoured to secure both the Interest and Unity of it. And whereas the Religion established by Law in this Kingdom, was intended to be, and by long Experience hath been found, an happy, as well as the only means to both those Ends: This Court hath resolved, That all such Laws as have been provided for the reducing all Dissenters to a thorow Conformity, shall be forthwith put into a speedy and vigorous Execution. We do therefore, with the Concurrence of the Right Reverend Father in God, our most Learned and Worthy Lord Bishop, desire all Ministers, and require as well all Constables and Church-wardens, truly and punctually to present, both at our Quarter Sessions and monthly Meeting, all such in their respective Parishes, as shall absent themselves from their own Parish Church upon any Sunday. And that such be presented also that come not at the beginning of Divine Service, and during the whole time of it, do not behave themselves with that Decency and Reverence as the Rubrich (which is confirmed by Law) does direct (viz.) *Kneeling at all the Prayers, Standing up at the giving of Glory to the Blessed Trinity, at the repeating of the Creed, the Hymns after the first and second Lessons, together with other things contained in the said Rubrich.* And that none may pretend Ignorance in their Duty, we therefore desire the Lord Bishop of this Diocese (that together with an injoyning all Ministers exactly to perform their own Duty) He please to command them by their Sermons and Catechizings to instruct their Parishioners in all those things the Laws require from them. By which Means, we hope in some time the true Worship of God will be thorowly understood, and honestly practised by the People of this County, to Gods Glory and our own Peace, Prosperity and Comfort.

PER CURIAM.

Seeing it is a certain Truth, that all Subjects (by the indispensable Law of Nature and Scripture) are bound to obey those Powers which God hath set over them; especially in those things which are ordained for the Preservation of the true Christian Religion; wherein the Glory of God and the Salvation of their Souls are more immediately concern'd: and whereas by the prudent and pious Care of our Governours, a Godly Liturgy, and form of Gods publick Worship, has been provided, and by our Laws (Ecclesiastical and Civil) established, requiring all Men, on the Lords Day (and other times by Law appointed) to repair to their respective Churches, and Communicate with the Congregation in Prayers, hearing the Word, and receiving Sacraments. A Liturgy not only for many years received in our Church, with little or no Opposition, till the late unhappy Times of Rebellion and Confusion; but also which has had the Approbation and Commendation of the most learned and pious Divines in other Protestant Churches. A Liturgy which Arch-Bishop Cranmer and his Fellow-Prisoners in Oxford daily used, till a little before their Martyrdom; when by the Cruelty of their Persecutors it was taken from them; and then (as appears by their Letters yet extant) those pious Martyrs sadly complained that they were deprived of the benefit of that Book: The Rejection of which, and the Disobedience to the Laws injoyning it, renders our Dissenters evidently Schismatical in their Separation from the Communion of our Church, as shall (God willing) in convenient time be made further appear. Seeing then our dissenting Brethren will not conform out of Conscience of their Duty and Obedience to God and their Governours; it is not only convenient, but necessary, that our good Laws be put in execution, for the Preservation of the publick Peace and Unity, and for the Good of the Dissenters themselves; for Afflictio dat intellectum, and their Sufferings by the Execution of our just Laws, may (by Gods Blessings) bring them to a Sense of their Duty, and a Desire to do it. For the attaining of which good Ends, I require all the Clergy of my Diocese within the County of Bedford, to publish this Order the next Sunday after it be tender'd to them, and diligently to promote the Design of it, according to those prudent and pious Directions given in the Order, and by Catechizing and Preaching (that they may have no pretence for their Ignorance) instructing the People in their Duty to God and the King. And that God Almighty would be graciously pleased to give a Blessing to your Endeavours to promote those good Ends, is and shall be the Prayer of

Your affectionate Friend, Brother
and Diocesan

THO. LINCOLNE.